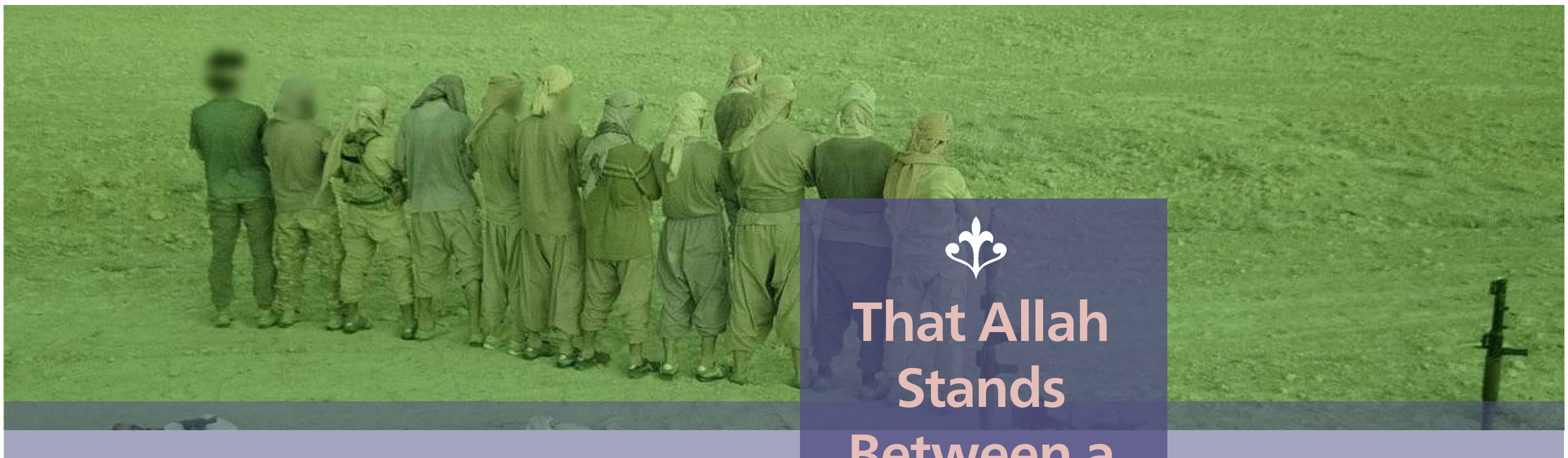


That Allah Stands Between a Man and His Heart

The Noble Qur'an is what guides the Muslim to his Lord. However, most people today have lost their way and became scattered because they kept away from the Qur'an and did not follow its commands or its prohibitions, which guarantees for the Muslim to reach safety in this life and on the Day of Reckoning. Allah says: "O you who believe! Respond to Allah and to the Messenger when He calls you to what will revive you. And know that Allah stands between a man and his heart, and that to Him you will be gathered" [Al-Anfal: 24].

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned five things in explaining the words "to what will revive you": One, faith. Two, the Qur'an, with which you are saved in this world and the Hereafter. Three: truth. Four: jihad that Allah honored you with after you were humiliated before. Five: shahadah, and Allah says about the martyrs: "They are alive, at their Lord, well provided for".

There is no contradiction between these, for they are all connected to each other. The truth is faith, and there is no faith without the Qur'an, and jihad protects the truth, and shahadah is the goal for every mujahid who believed and followed the path of the truth.

At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned four things in explaining the words of the All-Mighty "That Allah comes between a person and his heart". One: he comes between the kafir and faith. Two: he comes between a person and his mind, that the person does not know what he is doing. Three: he comes between a person and his heart, that he cannot believe or disbelieve except by Allah's permission. Four: he is close to his heart, and nothing is beyond his knowledge, be it secrets or others. At-Tabari joined these things by stating: "It is tidings from Allah, that He controls the hearts of His worshipers more than they control themselves, and that He comes between them if He wants that, until the owner of the heart cannot realize anything with it, be it faith or kufr, or to grasp anything, or to understand, except by Allah's permission".

Allah also says: "And We turn away their hearts and their visions, as they refused to believe in it the first time, and We leave them blundering in their rebellion" [Al-An'am: 110]. The people of interpretation said about this verse: "Do not disobey the commands of Allah at first, so Allah prevents you from obeying it later, and your hearts become separated, as Allah comes between a person and his heart, turning over hearts as He pleases and dismisses it to what He pleases. So let the worshiper say this du'a repeatedly: O Diverter of hearts! Make my heart steady on Your religion! O Swerver of hearts! Swerve my heart to what pleases You!"

The people of interpretation added a nice comment to that, saying: "They brought it upon themselves, the door was opened to them and they chose not to enter, and the path was paved for them and they did not follow. And so they were prevented when it was convenient for them".

'Ataa (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his interpretation of "and We leave them blundering in their rebellion": "We let them down and we let them go even more astray". At-Tabari said: "They hesitate. They are not guided to the truth nor do they see what is righteous. They were let down to oblivion, and overwhelmed by Satan". That is because they lagged behind when guidance came and they disregarded it when they knew about it and were close to it.

Close to that is what Ibn Kathir said in his interpretation of "And when they swerved, Allah swerved their hearts" [As-Saff: 5]: "When they chose not to follow the truth after they knew it, Allah misguided their hearts, and made them filled with doubt and confusion, and they were let down". So you see them floundering in their darkness.

Here it is necessary to point that what was said here does not mean that Allah prevents His worshipers from faith, rather He commands them and invites them to it. Allah stands between a worshiper and guidance, and that is due to deeds and arrogance. So it is only fairness from Allah and a punishment for who is derelict in seeking guidance, and who drowned himself in the seas of lust and negligence intentionally choosing his pleasure and life over his religion and Akhirah..

Allah enables His worshipers to seek guidance and once they are guided He steadies them on that - by His grace - as a reward for their efforts in seeking guidance from Allah. One of the most important causes for this is rushing to the truth once you know of it, and for those who neglect or lag behind, their hearts are about to be misguided by Allah, and he is left to himself, and thus he suffers a great loss.

Those who neglect answering the calls of faith and jihad and drag themselves slowly to it, while they know it is the truth to be followed, they cannot feel safe that Allah will not stand between them and their heart tomorrow, when they are unable to answer to the truth, as a punishment for their negligence and not rushing to the truth after they knew it. Truly, Allah does not wrong anybody.

Stories about the likes of this are plenty, from those who the truth knocked on his door, but he did not open it! and looked away! preferring this life over death or imprisonment, or thinking he has too much time to respond, so when he wanted to follow the caravan of truth, he was unable to, as it had already departed! because Allah punished him by standing between him and his heart.

Many of those lagging behind jihad were able to make hijrah and jihad at one point, but they declined and preferred to live and did not answer the call. So when they sought that later, they were prevented from it! And how many sinners refused to repent and did not rush to ask for forgiveness, so when they wanted to do so they were prevented and were unable to repent, and they stayed prisoners for their sins and lust, eating their hearts and bodies. The reward is of the type of the deed, and the talk about this is long, and the examples we live with are too many to be counted in an article. The goal is to take example and be wary. That is why they say: "If your wind blows, use it", and in the Hadith of Muslim, that Abu Hurayra, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Rush to good deeds before there are temptations like pieces of the dark night...," meaning initiate and rush to do good before temptations arrive that stand between you and that.

The verses of the Qur'an are full with these terrifying scoldings which tear apart the hearts of the believers, like the words of the All-Mighty: "A barrier will be placed between them and what they desire," and His words: "Then they slip away. Allah has diverted their hearts," and His words: "And when they swerved, Allah swerved their hearts". And there are other verses that speak about Allah's punishment with standing between the worshiper and his heart, and swerving it from the truth and preventing it from guidance due to what he brought upon himself from diverting from the truth and disregarding it, and negligence in answering the calls of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

It is known that there is no call that revives the Muslims in our time like the calls for jihad for the sake of Allah, as jihad is the duty of the Hour with which the religion is protected along with honor, and Muslims can live a life of faith and guidance. So rush, O Muslims, to your trenches before you are diverted from them, and there are obstacles between you and being able to do it, and Allah will grant victory to those who support Him.